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Music, Music education, and Institutional Ideology: A Praxial Philosophy of Musical Sociality

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*Music is a human action (praxis), guided by intentionality, that embodies sociality. The many significant **social** values of music, however, get lost in high-minded but faulty claims that music's essential value is to promote aesthetic experience. A survey of some basic aesthetic premises demonstrates that claims for 'proper' appreciation are speculative and fail to account for the extensive social history of music—a history altogether ignored in preparing music teachers. Considered as praxis, music is 'good' according to what it is personally and socially 'good for'—including, but not only, concert contemplation. The social institutions of 'high' concert music and music education have been too dependent on a connoisseurship rationale/ideology, and the resulting hegemony over school music teaching problematically creates a never ending need for advocacy. Music education as and for praxis entails an ethical criterion that reflects on pragmatic and lasting benefits for graduates and society and promotes support on the bases of noticeable results in a community.*

Keywords: *praxis, social theory, institutions, ideology, hegemony, critical theory, aesthetic theory*

A praxial account of music takes a distinct position about what music is that sharply contrasts with the view of music as a collection of 'works' contemplated in leisure time for their own sake. In advancing the account of music as praxis, what follows will analyze music and music education as social institutions that embody guiding ideologies. It proposes a praxial framework for both music and music education as a corrective to the present jeopardized status of music education in schools and as an ideological change towards principles of justice and democracy that benefits *all* students, not just the selected few. Thus considered, music education can and should promote noteworthy pragmatic benefits for personhood¹ and for society at large.

The dominant ideology and rationale taken for granted by countless music teachers, despite some headway in recent years, has been rooted in the prolific and contradictory speculations of aesthetics. This *aesthetic ideology*² is so firmly taken for granted and engrained in many teacher's minds that any evidence or departure from its status quo catechisms is often rejected out of hand. In answer to the hegemony of this assumption, the premises of music education as promoted by apologists of the current ideology deserve revision and, instead, a firm commitment to a praxial alternative adopted for all forms and levels of school (and community-based) music education.

Music as a social action

Music is a human *action* or *praxis*.³ An action is defined by action theory in several disciplines as an undertaking guided by *intentionality*. It thus differs in consequential ways from ordinary "activity" which, in comparison, is routine, often automatic, and non-deliberative. Intentionality, instead, is the 'about-ness' of an action: what an action, plans, envisions, or deliberately seeks to accomplish. In terms of pragmatist philosophy, intentionality refers to what an action is thought to be 'good for'—what benefits in human affairs it seeks to *promote*, what *difference* an agent seeks to make.⁴

Music is also an *art*. But the *invention* of the idea of 'fine art' in the 16th century⁵ has raised countless opinions around the question of "What is art?" that motivates the writings of aestheticians, art historians and some philosophers of art, but that fail to conclusively differentiate 'fine art' from crafts,⁶ non-art, popular art, folk or ethnic art, religious art, and a host of other contentious distinctions. However, the endless attempts at such distinctions make no clear difference in pragmatic effect, fail to settle such academic questions in any useful way, and only take for granted the social category already accepted when referring to 'fine' arts.⁷ The etymology of the word "art" from the Latin *ars* referred merely to productive skill, craftsmanship, and technical expertise (*techne* in Ancient Greece). But this only led back to the conception of music as an action (*praxis*), under the guidance of intentionality; the mindful use of skill, cleverness, flexibility, and the like to produce a desired result that benefits people.

A much desired value in music, from early in music history (viz., ancient Greece), is that it has been ‘good for’ enhancing or advancing the many forms of *sociality*: that is, the character or process of being social; of having a social value, intention, meaning, disposition, or state of mind; the human tendency to seek and value social interactions and their shared benefits. Historically, though left out of (or denied by) typical musicological studies (and the music history surveys required of most music education majors), music was and still is a social praxis—even the concert music preferred by aesthetes and connoisseurs.⁸

Different musics,⁹ then, arise in the service of various social needs—concert listening (symphonies, operas, musicals, and other musical entertainments) but also, *inter alia*, weddings, funerals, celebrations, leisure time, amateur performances, folk and other indigenous musics, and so on. And all are different according to the various human needs, interests, and values that are the *raison d’être* of each. Thus understood, ‘good music’ is music that effectively serves the pragmatic ‘goods’—needs, values, goals—that bring each distinct kind of *music*ing into being to begin with; that satisfy the human wants at stake.¹⁰

How has music come to have this pragmatic role in human affairs? Because trumpet fanfares are not ‘good for’ inducing a child to sleep; and most children’s lullabies are not ‘good for’ adult listening. And the ‘seventh inning stretch’ in U.S. professional baseball often features a soulful rendition of “God bless America.” Beyond being a song with the usual musical features (however unassuming), there is no doubt that its meaning is social and its effects collectively shared. It is not such a big conceptual step, then, to the social dynamics of a collective audience experience of, say, Beethoven’s *Ninth Symphony*, Handel’s *Messiah*, and other ever-popular concert compositions—all of which share in the social ambiance thus created.¹¹ ‘Good music’ of all kinds is in fact among the major avenues of human sociality. And the meaning offered by various musics ranges according to the different social needs that they satisfy. Ranking some as higher or lower (e.g., entertainment vs. ‘fine art’,¹² “uptown” vs. “downtown”) is without logic or merit, and society clearly benefits from the entire range of musics.

Society is an assortment, intersection, and often collision of social needs and arrangements, in the form of *institutions* (e.g., schools, banks, businesses, money, government, police, media, etc.). Each comes into being not in some final form at a

particular time in history (e.g., the ‘first’ school or bank); they socially evolve into existence and continue to change over time. Schools, for example, evolved differently in different countries at different times and for different reasons,¹³ each to meet locally unique and pressing needs of the times.

Schools today, however, contend with a host of ever-more complicated and demanding social concerns. This typically makes schools a target for considerable social tension and unrest as they evolve to meet needs not always agreed to by all in a society (e.g., sex education) or to needs that society struggles to deal with (e.g., racism, gender equality). Many other values are at stake, as well, often as contested by various social factions, each with its favored *action ideals* in mind.¹⁴ For example, some religion-affiliated schools ban dancing, while public schools¹⁵ often sponsor it in the name of developing adolescents’ social and other developmental needs. Arguments also ensue about evolution versus creationism, political revisionism of a country’s history and, in particular, about whether schools should *transform* the social status quo or should *transmit* it without question or improvement.¹⁶

Music education, understood here as the pursuit of musical learning and increased socio-musical competence in a school setting,¹⁷ is often swept up in these controversies: for example, which (or whose) musics to teach and whether to have a “Christmas Concert” or a “Winter Concert.” Santa Claus and the Easter Bunny seem to get by in many communities, though Halloween is not always easily accepted due to its religious heritage in All Saints Eve with both Christian and pagan derivations. Music is typically implicated in all these interests, even when contentious (e.g., religious or political texts¹⁸), and the social role of music in the agendas of schools is thus of keen interest to many people. Consider for example, children excused from music class for religious reasons. That very few (if any) rural schools in the U.S. have gospel choirs is another example. Or take into account, in North America at least, the considerable effect of say, marching and pep bands at school sports events, or the importance for a community of the school musical. These roles (and many others) for music in schools are compelling evidence that music is deeply social in its sources, its effects and affects, and in its many types and genres, all of which serve different ‘goods’ in music’s major role as a building block of society.

However, these social values get lost, denied, negated in the noble-sounding and credulous rationale that the essential value or ‘goodness’ of music is to foster

aesthetic experiences; that these are rare and suitable only for occasional moments of leisure; and that the such music is ‘for’ lofty and cerebral *contemplation*.¹⁹ This taken for granted supposition, despite its impressive sounding highbrow claims, is a major impediment to the *pragmatic* and *social effectiveness* of school music. Music educators should instead promote the value of music’s contribution to human sociality and should encourage social justice through music that benefits all in society, not just the selected and self-selected few who have been in large school-based ensembles.

Aesthetic Theories

Given the taken for granted aesthetic *rationale* for music education that results from the aesthetic ideology,²⁰ some common suppositions of aesthetics are useful to summarize²¹—especially since most music educators have not studied or had courses in aesthetics. This absence of aesthetic theories in the training of music teachers is extremely odd, given the important role that aesthetic theory and experience are said by aesthetes to play in the various forms and pleasures of music, and in rationales for why music is taught in schools. Most often, the aesthetic ideology is accepted uncritically by many music teachers who, in fact, know little or nothing at all about it.

To begin with, the term “aesthetics” doesn’t even come into being in its modern sense until the 1750 treatise of German philosopher Alexander Baumgarten called *Aesthetica*. He attempted to restore the philosophical importance of the ancient Greek idea of *aisthesis* that referred to empirical (sensory) knowledge. Aisthesis had been downplayed in intellectual history (up through the “Age of Reason” of the 17th century) as a reliable source of knowledge in favor of *rationalism* and *logic*. Thus, over those centuries, the ‘faculty of reason’ was promoted as the most reliable source of knowledge because it depended on logical argument, warranted demonstration, and the like—contentions that, as publicly examined, could reach intersubjective agreement. Aisthesis, instead, was criticized for depending on the bodily senses, which was idiosyncratic between individuals and situations.²² Thus it was regarded, at best, as subjective sensibility (or, in the arts, a matter of personal ‘taste’) and was denied as a valid or reliable source of truth and reliable knowledge.

Baumgarten (1714–1762; an extremely minor figure then and now), in continuing the preceding Age of Reason, argued in his treatise that beauty could be

judged according to rational principles. Thus he argued for aisthesis as a “science”—as he called it—of sensory experience that could deduce principles of beauty (viz., good taste) in nature and the arts.²³ His aesthetic theory resulted in two problems. Firstly, Baumgarten’s treatise dealt only with poetry and prose. This remains a problem since the hypothesis of “aesthetic experience” is, somehow, typically generalized to all the arts despite their obvious differences. But, for example, the experience of viewing the *Mona Lisa* or reading a poem is not really comparable to, say, the experience of listening to a symphony, or to a rousing jazz improvisation, or to rap, reggae, or rock.

Secondly, from the first his thesis was met with resistance by the philosophers of the time.²⁴ In particular, the German philosopher Immanuel Kant quickly dismissed Baumgarten’s argument that aesthetics could be a rational approach to standards or criteria that would qualify ‘good taste’ for beauty in the arts. He argued, instead, that aesthetic judgment was a subjective category that revealed only an *inner* experience of *pleasure* and was not a matter of any aesthetic ‘properties’ *in* the sources of such pleasure. He recommended, then, that the term be restricted to empirical science, or relegated to speculative philosophy. And, indeed, the history of aesthetics has continued to be speculative, not evidence-based.

In a later treatise, however, Kant proposed the concept of “free” (or “pure”) beauty. Such beauty was supposedly purified of worldly and personal concerns and concepts, transcended individual differences and thus provided a “common sensibility”—a *sensus communis*—of shared judgment where all could (or should) agree on what was beautiful. For Kant, and many after him, ‘good taste’ was equated with the “beautiful” and the “sublime”—the latter a favored concept in the 19th century.²⁵ This *free* beauty was contrasted to *dependent* beauty that relied on concepts and subjective variables (such as visceral responses and functional criteria) that negated an ideal of beauty that was devoid of human biases and predispositions. Free beauty, for Kant, was exemplified by nature: its attractions did not depend on human preferences; like some sunsets, such attractions just were beautiful. In fact, he did not write much about art or music as such. He regarded music an “agreeable” entertainment of the senses, but he worried that music imposed itself on people in ways that were sometimes unavoidable. The singing of hymns by his neighbors was said to distract his thinking.

Nonetheless, the distinction between free and dependent beauty was *mistakenly* taken as an *aesthetic theory of art* in the speculations of subsequent aestheticians, and philosophers (many of whom had no particular credentials in the arts, but nonetheless included aesthetics as part of their comprehensive philosophies) who promoted free beauty as the source of supposedly aesthetic responses to art.²⁶ For many who were advancing this aesthetic theory of art, ‘appropriate’ responses to art and music were to be (a) devoid of bodily effects or affects (i.e., bodily responses), (b) set apart from dependence on real-world concepts and functions, and (c) relied on contemplation alone. Thus was Kant’s distinction indiscriminately extended into an endless variety of theories of the so-called aesthetics of ‘fine art’ and the concept of beauty or the sublime²⁷ and ‘good taste’ (for beauty) that developed.²⁸ Today there are as many aesthetic theories as there are aestheticians, endlessly deliberated in the often contradictory entries of various scholarly companions and guides to aesthetics.

Yet these theories often describe (or prescribe) the ‘proper’ experiencing of art and music in terms that often run contrary to the interests and experiences of most people, even many who attend concerts and visit art museums. For example, one common premise is the criterion of “aesthetic distance” or “disinterestedness.” This so-called *aesthetic attitude* stipulates the need to disassociate (distance) one’s personal and subjective situation from, in our case, musical experience. Thus, ‘sadness’ in music is said to ‘express’ (or, more precisely, to be “expressive of”) the abstract and universal concepts of death and grief and is not to be confused with actually ‘feeling’ the human, embodied forms of those conditions at a funeral.²⁹

A related aesthetic condition for experiencing art stems from Kant’s perspective on nature: the attractions of nature have no ultimate purpose beyond human interests: they just are beautiful. Carried into art by subsequent aestheticians, then, is the principle that art exhibits “purposiveness without purpose”: the presumption that art *does* have a purpose—but only of being art! This supposition of “art for art’s sake”³⁰ proposes that art has no ultimate personal or social purpose or function (no ‘good for’), other than to adorn the walls, impress, and entertain visitors in the drawing rooms of the rising middle class of the 18th and 19th centuries. Thus, in effect, the purpose of art became its *uselessness*, and its value in effect became *social*: the purpose of impressing ‘high society’ by demonstrating a taste for beauty and wealth for its own sake.³¹ Today, however, the capitalist commodification of art and

music has made both so expensive that the middle class can afford only reproductions and recordings.³²

Another closely related aesthetic premise is the *autonomy* of art and music from life: ‘good music’—called *absolute music*—is thus said to exist in a timeless and placeless sociocultural vacuum, is contemplated “for itself,” and is not ‘good for’ any further non-musical functions (e.g., social or otherwise). One philosopher of music denounces this “automania” and the “automaniacs” who seem to think that music floats down to earth from Mars in some rarefied and purified form, devoid of social grounding, social meanings or contexts, and useful consequences for enriching life.³³ This belief in automania is a lasting effect of Kant’s free beauty as mistakenly extended into the aesthetic theory of art.

It eventually led to the social praxis of concerts and recitals being reserved from everyday life to intermittent, rare times of leisure.³⁴ But, somehow, that the music in question is nonetheless ‘good for’ the praxial function of delighting audiences got lost in the many aporia of aesthetic theorizing. The *affective being together* of audiences thus gets denied; each audience member is supposedly “alone together” (as the song title goes), and as though the “focused gathering”³⁵ and *affective synchrony* of listeners does not matter. To understand how lacking such a claim is, consider experiencing a symphony or opera as the only listener in the hall! And, in any case, everything about the music—even listening to or making music at home—is social.³⁶ For example, everything from the effects of a society’s geography on the available sounds (e.g., drums vs. pianos),³⁷ to how sounds are organized (e.g., adopting music to the Mass liturgy vs. the trance inducement of drumming praxis), to the different kinds of audience behavior (jazz enjoyed in a club vs. the church-like seriousness of concert etiquette imposed under the aegis of aesthetic theorizing³⁸). Also consider the functional design of concert hall architecture, the formal attire of performers, clapping (and when not to clap), intermission discussions, the typical three curtain calls, and—for concerto performances—the audience expectation of a solo encore, and much more. All of these are social variables occasioned by any musicing and its social setting.

One result of the denial of the deep roots of musical sociality is, as one philosopher of music puts it, that music has been relegated to the status of an “imaginary museum of musical works,”³⁹ largely contemplated in leisure time mainly

by ‘classy’ and *refined* audiences that surveys show are increasingly greying (and affluent). Another important consequence of this denial is that the important and extensive *social history* and *sociology of music* are purposefully ignored in the training of musicians! And music teachers in particular are therefore denied the perspective of music as an inherently social act; an undertaking that pervades every society in extremely consequential ways.⁴⁰

Praxis

In decided contrast to aesthetic theories of music, a praxial account gains support from social history, cultural studies, ethnomusicology, and the sociology and social psychology of music and eschews aesthetic speculations. Like language, then, the praxis of music is valued for its many contributions to sociality. For example, music serves as a foundation for *group belonging*, as in the case of what social psychologists of music call “taste publics and taste cultures.”⁴¹ These may have somewhat less social impact in comparison to groups whose very social existence and cohesion depends on music shared as a community: religious,⁴² national, ethnic, celebratory musics, adolescent cohorts (e.g., “punkers,” “metal heads”), and so on.

Consider, as well, the social impact of the compositions of nationalistic composers whose music is rarely heard outside of their nations yet is treasured in their countries; the attempts of dictatorships to sanction musics that influence society in ways contrary to their social repression (e.g., Shostakovich under Stalin) or the obsession of Hitler and the Nazis with Wagner⁴³ (and also Bruckner), and the Israel Philharmonic’s ban on playing Wagner. Also notable are the many uses or functions of music that reinforce *social solidarity*: national anthems, music selected for a wedding or a dinner, music at sporting events (pep bands, and the like), *Taps* at a military funeral (and other funeral music), and other musical occasions that are decidedly social in intent and content. The social dimensions of musical meaning for audiences are typically discredited and demeaned by the aesthetic ideology of art which prefers to stress the ‘free beauty’ claim and thus music’s autonomy from social concepts and relevance.

In comparison, for the praxial (and pragmatist) account given here, *music is good according to the criteria of what it is personally and socially ‘good for’*—namely, the social ‘goods’ (i.e., values, needs, functions, uses, meanings) that bring

this or that music into being in the first place, or that condition its creation or reception. And this criterion applies to all musics, from the most mundane to the highest-minded. The ‘high-culture’ status is an ideological *conceit* of Western colonialism that has relegated ‘good music’ to mainly contemplative praxis by ‘cultivated’ listeners.⁴⁴ However, throughout much of the world music is a function of everyday life and everyone in a community is engaged in musicing.⁴⁵ Even in ‘advanced’ societies, music is so omnipresent that it sometimes is difficult to escape (e.g., Christmas season). Thus, extremely unlike the all too plentiful speculations of aesthetic theories, the praxial account of music is down-to-earth and decidedly pragmatic. It affirms that the musics people appreciate are those chosen to enhance their daily lives. ‘Appreciation’, in the praxial perspective, is thus seen empirically as the *use* of music to promote the ‘good life’. The appreciation of music, then, typically adheres to the social premises of music as praxis.⁴⁶

Witness: A renowned jazz combo in Finland was hired for a dance party. But the music performed—which was ‘good for’ for just listening—was not ‘good for’ dancing and especially lacked the Finnish tango,⁴⁷ a major infatuation in that country. Audience complaints (rare in that country) soon led to the use of a standard fake book that guided the ensemble for the rest of the evening of audience favorites that included plenty of Finnish tangos. This is not a rare example.⁴⁸ The musics we are most in contact with are ‘good for’ their daily effects (and affects), not simply ‘for’ leisure time contemplation. Happily, however, there are plenty of musics for concert audiences of connoisseurs and aesthetes that meet distinctly different musical criteria and social ‘goods’ and that represent a special and important musical praxis of their own.

While the term “praxis” may at first seem to be odd or uninviting—just as the word “aesthetic” was at its introduction to Kant—its original Greek meaning goes well beyond everyday reference to “practices.” In comparison to praxis (or the ungainly praxies), everyday “practices” tend to be routinized, reactive or automatic, lack ethical substance, and at most are status quo or perfunctory forms of agency that have short-lived purposes and consequences. The practice of taking an umbrella when rain is forecast is an example. The reactive habit of adjusting eyeglasses on my nose is another. Routinely using the stairs rather than the elevator is a practice. However, when praxis is used in connection with musicing, music is understood both

as socially *constituted* and as socially *formative* in terms of its pragmatic and its sociocultural effects, not as a collection of ‘works’ in an “imaginary museum” called the concert hall.⁴⁹

To begin with, as Aristotle wrote, praxis is a prime form of *practical* knowledge (as opposed, for example, to *theoria*, as in aesthetic theories⁵⁰—of which there are as many as there are aestheticians). Such *praxial knowledge* grows over a personal and social history of ‘doing’ (i.e., learning by doing) and is useful. But it goes beyond the possession of well-honed skills that Aristotle identified as *techne*. *Techne* (technical, craft, rule-based knowledge) involves ‘how to’ skills that are taught by “this is how it goes,” “do it this way” kinds of modeling and rule-following—a pedagogy of *rote learning* all too common in music lessons and ensembles. Such skills are usually not controversial (e.g., the rules for how to perform from notation or for following metronome and dynamic markings) and at most involve an artisanship that is usually passed down directly from master to apprentice by demonstration. Some key aspects of individual music lessons in music rightly involve *techne*.⁵¹ However, much remains to be desired by traditional pedagogies with their emphasis on technique as though for its own sake⁵² and with a musical focus on and criteria for the classical repertory alone. Of the millions in the world who study music under such conditions, how many either reach artistic merit or quit lessons because they wanted to play *music*, not scales and unmusical technique builders? How many continue to play as adult amateurs?

Techne, as technical competence, is certainly a necessary part of any successful musicing. But, for example, the musical pleasures and praxis of amateurs (i.e., students of any age) are necessarily different. It is pedagogically short sighted and self-defeating to assume that “lovers” of music (*amateurs*) are to be denied its pleasures until they have attained concert competence.⁵³ Standards for the latter are certainly ‘good for’ the listening pleasures of connoisseurs. But musical sociality has much more to offer than the kinds available at concerts and recitals. Nonetheless, study in preparation for concert and recital standards (i.e., “presentational” music) is the common paradigm guiding much individual instruction and school ensembles.⁵⁴ In decided contrast, the praxial standard for ‘good music’ observes how effectively the music (as selected, performed, and socially situated) meets the needs and conditions of the social circumstances that bring it into being!

For Aristotle, the knowledge base of *techne* mainly serves the making of ‘things’—including performances. However, “excellent making” (Greek *poiesis*)—what we might call virtuosity—is often mistakenly valued in music education ‘for itself’. This topic is not suitable to extended discussion here. At issue, however, are several key questions. If ‘works’ from the “imaginary museum” are the standard to be addressed, then how do we account for (a) significant differences between performing artists of the same ‘works’—even performances by the same performer of those same works over time?⁵⁵; (b) ever-changing performance conventions (according to, *inter alia*, improved instruments⁵⁶ and the evolution of tastes?); (c) recent musicological scholarship (‘authentic’ scores); (d) the semiotics (i.e., symbolic meaning) of the social spaces in which music is heard (e.g., religious choral music heard in a church or cathedral vs. in a secular concert hall)?; or (e) listening to recordings the final results of which have been influenced by choices of recording engineers as well as by the artists’ performances?; and (f) the influence of repeated hearings via recordings of “the music” as it is heard over time?; and a host of other variables? Praxis, both in its ancient Greek and more contemporary forms in social theory (especially Critical Theory, classical neo-Marxian sociology, and European sociology and social theory⁵⁷) takes such variables into primary consideration, not just the excellence of *techne*.

Praxis, in contrast to the ‘makings’ of *techne*, focuses on *action undertaken in behalf of others*; in behalf of people’s needs or betterment. Because it involves practical actions that benefit *people*, not the production of ‘things’—including as ‘things’ the next recital or school ensemble concert—, it generates an important dimension of *ethical criteria* missing in *techne* and in everyday references to routine “practices.” The ethical and pragmatic criterion at stake is a matter of determining and generating what is ‘good for’—what benefits—those who are to be served by the praxis. In school music, those are the musical and other developmental needs of students (including social needs): not the needs of the teacher (musical or for personal acclaim, etc.) or of the reputation of the program as a template that overrides students’ *individual* needs.

Understood praxially, then, music is decidedly not a collection of museum ‘works’ but a living, thriving source of endless acts of sociality. It is a fund of social actions structured *by* past and existing society and culture and, at the same time,

contributes to the present and future structuring of society and culture.⁵⁸ Since it seems that this should be obvious, how have things gone wrong—given school music’s mounting need to advertise its relevance to taxpayers, and with dwindling audiences for concerts and operas? One factor is that music is also a *social institution*. In fact, “it” is a convergence of many institutions, many musics, each with its own social and musical dynamics. And music education is likewise a social institution and therefore guided—for better or worse—by its own ideology concerning what music “is” and is ‘good for’ in life and society.

Institutions and ideologies

Institutions⁵⁹ are typically obsessed with perpetuating their defining ideologies and resulting activities, or—often at the same time—are focused on steadfast opposition to competing institutions and their agendas. This social fact should provoke critical reflection, because *ideology* determines and guides the functions the institution comes into being to serve, and not always with due attention to actual consequences. Thus, consequences brought about by institutions may be negative in ways that are (a) self-defeating, that (b) play into the hands of competing institutions, and that (c) progressively lead to institutional irrelevance.

Such problems become evident when comparing the very different and often competing institutional agendas of school music with the contemplative music of the university and concert hall; with folk, indigenous and exoteric musics; and most of the rest of the entire music world itself, especially including the music industry as an institutional force. Consider, in particular, in a world saturated with music, the growing necessity to defend school music, and the efforts world-wide to attract concert and opera audiences away from other musics. The central role of ideology in institutional behavior thus requires some further analysis.

The term is often associated with (at least) two overlapping though distinct notions. In perhaps its most general form, it identifies an organized set of ideas, doctrines or beliefs that form the basis of a social system. Even in this neutral sense, ideologies take the social form of institutions that advance or preserve certain favored values, goals, or principles rather than others. Put another way, *institutions are the social manifestations of ideologies at work in the public sphere (including the home*⁶⁰). In this regard, the ideological basis of school music is always important

to bear in mind since, especially given the historical perspective of the aesthetic education doctrine, music education in many places has changed over the years.⁶¹

The institutional values at stake in preparing school music teachers are noticeably and undoubtedly dominated by what can be called the “conservatory mind-set” of university programs, as based on and rooted primarily in the ‘fine art’ music extolled historically by speculative theories of aesthetic contemplation. While aesthetic theory is rarely taught *directly*, a connoisseurship paradigm for ‘high’ concert music (and often jazz, where included at all) is nonetheless promoted *indirectly* by implication and socialization.⁶² Typically ignored, even repudiated, by the pervasive aesthetic ideology, are studies that confirm the sociality and social structuring effects of music; for example, the sociology and anthropology of music, ethnomusicology, cultural studies, and the social and “listening” or “reception history” of music.⁶³ Therefore, prospective teachers (and most professional musicians) are taught nothing about such social scholarship of music and its relevance to the changing times and needs of society.

The question arises, then, as to why this extensive range of scholarship about music and society is so foreign to the preparation of music educators? After all, school music is predicated on a different institutional ideology than university music schools: instead of preparing elite music *professionals*, school music exists to provide students with a well-rounded and functional *general education* that includes music—functional in the sense that it should foster notable musical benefits that are life-enriching to individuals and society. What, then, instead of training for the very few who might seek professional careers, should the role of music education be in the general education of *all* students—the original source of the term “general music”—if not ‘for’ music praxis that enhances the daily lives of all graduates?

And what, beyond a school-based social activity, should the tangible musical and social benefits be for the lifelong musicing of those who have been involved in school ensembles? The aesthetic ideology for school music is either blithely unconcerned with whether or not such lasting dispositions and values have been promoted; or it prefers to *assume* that aesthetic ‘goods’ are the automatic and (somehow) enduring results of musical ‘experiences’ provided in classes and ensembles. The actual consequences of this ideology today are too often clearly negative when considering the many competing musical interests of most students and adult graduates. Such

ideological claims therefore risk being self-defeating, and have led to the progressive irrelevance of school music in the minds of taxpayers and administrators, with monies supporting other programs that contribute directly to personhood and society (and are subject to the reigning ‘testocracy’ in the US).

Wait; what about the second meaning of ideology? In this sense from Critical Theory⁶⁴ the term refers to the ideas, values, and politics of a **socially dominant** group that are advanced (or imposed, if need be) by the claim that they are in the best interests of all less powerful, less dominant social groups—even (or especially) if they don’t agree! Once again, the dominant group that governs formal music education at many levels is university faculty with its single-minded focus on artistry and connoisseurship.⁶⁵ Thus an enormous amount of time and energy has aspiring teachers preparing to attain ‘high’ artistic criteria—as though these are also (or should be) the ideological focus of school music. And to what ends? To the perpetuation of the contemplative theories speculated on by aestheticians? If so, then such ends are clearly not being accomplished by school music. (Aesthetes are the first to complain loudly about the musical preferences of the public!). Thus the result for music teachers is an overwhelming preponderance of performance studies in their teacher preparation, compared to studies devoted to music education per se. And few of their musical studies actually apply to the music praxis they might instead promote as teachers. And, of course, many habits and values of the university ideology of music education for professionals become such a strong part of music teachers’ *ideological socialization* that their effects also continue to typically dominate school music, despite its considerably different ideological claims, values, and needs!

The hegemony of such training should be a frequent target of the *ideology critiques* of Critical Theory and, in education, of Critical Pedagogy.⁶⁶ But despite their many contributions to educational theory, neither gets much attention in music education circles. Both are concerned to help students and thus society to be critically aware of overbearing ideologies that dominate day-to-day life in schools and society. They seek, instead, to empower graduates to resist and be free of such hegemony and to become authors of their own values and thus personal histories. This is directly a matter of social justice.

With school music, the weakness of the prevailing ideology is seen when students—the largest number who are indifferent to the dominating connoisseurship paradigm and its repertory—drop out of music classes (at least mentally), avoid music electives, or quit ensemble membership or individual lessons.⁶⁷ Yet this aesthetic hegemony typically remains the ‘elephant’ in the class and rehearsal room; its problems get ignored as threatening the status quo or as too inconvenient to challenge or ameliorate.⁶⁸ So they continue to exert a substantial influence over teachers and curriculum, one that is difficult to justify school music’s claims of contributing to the quality and lasting effects on the musical lives of most graduates. It is an influence that often results in *injustice* for those whose musical needs are not accommodated by large, presentational ensembles predicated on the aesthetic ideology: student bands, choirs, and orchestras. And who notices the elementary general music program and its effect for life-long musicing?

Given its failure to promote lasting sociopersonal results for all students, the existing ideology dominating much of school music deserves to be replaced by an ideology that rediscovers, credits, and properly advances music as social praxis. An ideology that acknowledges ethical conditions of praxis in promoting pragmatic and enduring results that tangibly serve the ongoing musical needs of *all* graduates, the community, and society. The speculative, contemplative, aesthetic model typically advanced by the dominant rationale and its methodatrics has not served music education well; that should be evident given the escalating struggle of school music for an effective presence in the educational program.

In regard to the dominating aesthetic ideology and its educational rationale, it is useful to remember that the closed network of ideas, convictions, beliefs, and habits of an educational ideology can be held so strongly that ‘true believers’ ignore or resist all contrary evidence or arguments and, as a result, fall into *malpraxis* (i.e., professional malpractice), defensiveness, and a tenacious continuation of the status quo. Those teachers who, as a result of their university socialization, accept and defend the belief that the aesthetic ideology for musical value is an effective basis for school music—despite its lack of lifelong legacy for graduates and other social problems—thus continue with this institutional ideology to the detriment of their social responsibilities as a “helping profession.”⁶⁹

School music as and for praxis

An alternative is already at hand, however, by which the musical intelligence and musicianship of teachers can prevail, both in what and how music is taught.

Returning to the premise that music is a social action, so too is teaching music. Everything conceivable about teaching music qualifies—or should!— as praxis. When music education proceeds as praxis, the *noticeable* and *notable results* support school music programs against cutbacks and benefit the lives of graduates and adults in society. Such an education is fully *accountable*—to students and taxpayers—not imply a matter of lofty, vague, and unaccountable aesthetic claims.

In order to be most fully accountable, praxial music education puts an *ethical* focus on enduring pragmatic results for the musical lives of all graduates. The praxial criterion for school music, then, is: What can students *do musically*, for the first time (i.e., at all), better, with more enjoyment, and more often, as a result of instruction. This is an empirical and thus accountable criterion that goes well beyond hollow and competing claims about aesthetic contemplation as music appreciation—a promised learning result of the dominant ideology that is not observable and thus cannot be weighed in planning instruction or assessing teaching accountability.

The *ethical* criterion of a praxial approach to music and music education is many-faceted. First, it is a *value added* criterion: It considers the lifelong values—musical, personal, and social—that have been advanced concerning the musical skills, attitudes, dispositions, and action ideals of students and graduates beyond what they either arrived with in schools or absorbed from society. Despite the impressive sounding idealism of many school music programs—which usually refers to local recognition of major ensembles—, the reality is that credulous claims for having developed or improved “aesthetic responsiveness” on the part of graduates are unverifiable. Such claims fail to bring about confirmable and accountable results (e.g., as seen by voters, school officials, etc.) and thus fail to convince the public that school music is worth supporting. It takes a stubbornly held ideology to doggedly ignore or reject the obvious fact that most graduates—even those few who enjoyed eight years of ensembles—are not, by any stretch of the imagination, typically inclined or educated by the hegemonic ideology to engage in music for the contemplative ends of the kind advanced by aesthetic rationales. Nor are they likely to remain musically active, beyond their casual enjoyment of popular musics.⁷⁰

The value-added criterion also distinguishes “instruction”—that is, the ‘delivery’ of lessons according to this or that method or lesson plan—from “teaching” that produces long-term dispositions and abilities needed to enhance the role of music in the life worth living—beyond, that is, the tide of popular musics that are appreciated without benefit of schooling. Praxialism seeks, then, to expand upon the basis of the musical dispositions that students bring with them to school each day. Otherwise, claims for “best practices” and “what works” amount to empty pedagogical ideologies that may be practicable—capable of ‘delivery’—but are too often musically insignificant in their pragmatic and lasting results. These—and ideologically institutionalized ‘delivery-methods’—amount to *methodolatry*:⁷¹ a single-minded devotion and thus allegiance to a delivery of stock lessons and rehearsal methods that too often fails to take into account the actual results of such instruction and their enduring contribution to a life-well lived through musicing. In effect, the method or lesson plan is ‘delivered’ but too often the praxis of music is not advanced.

Another ethical criterion is to “do no harm”: the ethic of praxis is also a matter of *social conscience*.⁷² “Harm” in music education does not necessarily mean physical harm. But it can! For example, students whose voices are damaged by the parts to which they are assigned or physical conditions that result from injurious practicing or pedagogy (e.g., not having beginners use a neck strap for wind instruments to reduce stress on their developing anatomy). Consider, also, any other habits that are potentially harmful to young bodies—often the same demands made in university studios that may be suitable for adult students but not for the developing bodies of the young. Teachers need to be alert to such potential harm (e.g., vocal nodes, carpal tunnel syndrome).

A related social issue is problem of serving the musical and social needs of only (or mainly) the selected few in major ensembles. By any account, this is an issue of *social justice*. The musical futures of *all* students—not just those in major ensembles—deserve to be addressed by curriculum and musical outlets offered that are suited to their tastes, abilities, and present interests. School music, thus, should reflect the music world outside of schools while at the same time endeavoring to expand the musical choices that students bring with them to school.

Furthermore, there is the *psychological* damage to fragile egos that are singled out for public embarrassment by the critiques or censure of the teacher, or by other

avoidable disappointments. And regarding such disappointments, the effects of a *systematic reliance on high-stakes competition* for seating in ensembles (and solos, lead roles) demand considerable critical attention and care-full [sic] judgment by teachers because, under its conditions, only *one* student reaches his or her ambition at the expense of all others *not* reaching theirs. This result can often leave some students feeling like losers.

It may be a comforting rationale to some teachers but it is philosophically and educationally empty to claim that the “cream rises to the top” since the result over the years from elementary to high school is that the dropout rate of students in ensembles is progressive and typically substantial.⁷³ School administrators thus all too often reduce music teacher staff when, out of large numbers of beginners, only a small percentage remain in high school ensembles. Yet, under the dominance of the prevailing ideology, this sometimes dramatic decline of student involvement is excused—sometimes even boasted about—in the name of ‘high standards’. Unfortunately, such claims often get embroiled with issues, again, of social justice when students who have ‘fallen by the wayside’ of the “program” (for whatever reasons) have no alternatives made available to them that can serve lifelong musicing.

A praxial approach to dealing with slower progressing or more challenged students instead *redoubles* a teacher’s efforts to bring about progress, satisfaction, and a disposition for continuing according to individual musical interests and capacities. This usually means offering more than the usual major presentational ensembles in order to provide opportunities for such students to progress at a pace and level suited to their aspirations; and that bring together students of similar interests and abilities in groups of various kinds and sizes in pursuit of musics that inspire their musical learning. Graduates denied such praxial benefits because of the purported ‘standards’ of the aesthetic ideology are limited in their musical literacy to consuming musics they already prefer.

Teaching as praxis is also ethically concerned with what school music contributes to the *community*. Community musicing and praxial education go hand-in-hand. Thus, do graduates (whether of chorus, band, orchestra, or general music classes) sing in church choirs? Do community ensembles even exist? One unfortunate effect of the dominant ideology is that few graduates have enough continuing interest to

find or make time for community ensembles that extend school music presentational models into adult life. One reason, of course, is that scheduling rehearsals of large ensembles for busy adults (and interested students) often prohibits such participation.

However, small and chamber groups (for all kinds of music) are easier to work into a busy schedule; and the failure of school music programs to stimulate interest in such kinds of more accessible praxis means that the school years typically become an educational and musical dead-end. As a result, too many graduates fail to show any long-term effects of their school music experiences (no matter how much they enjoyed the sociality of band, chorus, or orchestra activities while in school). So the claim that school music has somehow—automatically!—made a significant, noteworthy, and profound difference in the musical lives of most school grads is at best wishful thinking promoted by teachers captivated by the dominant ideology into which they were institutionalized. The tangible effects of a praxis-based program, in contrast, are readily noted by teachers and the public, serve as models for adult interests, and promote community support for school music.

Any lack of continuing influences from school music is an institutional failing judging by the professed ideological commitment of school music to contribute to the general education of all students and to the good life lived in part through music. It is precisely the weaknesses students have in the 3 R's that engage public and political controversy. But in music education, the promised result of aesthetic education fails to produce *musical* learning that is comparable in its benefits to students and the community. And while the public is increasingly concerned with the results of schooling that justify their tax support, music educators feel free to exclaim aesthetic benefits as their contribution. Unfortunately, such claims are not observable, and thus clearly seem to be escaping the notice of society and taxpayers. Whatever it is that teachers bound to the aesthetic rationale think they're offering, the public (and school officials) don't seem to be impressed enough to support it. This is evidenced by the increasing need for advocacy and by the increasing pressures on music teachers, with larger classes, less time for music, and a growing failure in many schools to fully support a music program.

In order to promote more enduring and noticeable results, are small group interests (in musics of any kind) initiated in the school years as models for adult

engagement—suited to the varying musical interests and abilities of students—so that, say, they seek (while students and as graduates) others to play duets, trios, and the like; or others who enjoy musicing based on models available in the community? Are local groups that can be models of the sociality of adult musicing included on school concert programs? Are student pianists coupled with soloists (or other pianists for duets); and are their efforts—and those of other students who take lessons—included on concert programs along with the major ensembles?

Next, does the school music program enliven the musical sociality of the community? What is *regularly* given back musically to the community for its support—not just, for example, Christmas caroling, but throughout the year? Are the accomplishments of student musicians (including their compositions, music media praxis, etc.) exhibited at local festivals? Are performances given in senior homes, or chamber and solo recitals—of all kinds of music—in a local church or library?⁷⁴ Such events should be planned regularly because students are eager to share their music socially (especially for each other). And what about enlisting advanced students in a variety of ways in guiding the practicing of younger students, in or outside of the school day? Such supervised practice can make a difference in students' progress and adds a social dimension.

And do music teachers—individually or collectively—maintain a school Internet website featuring notices of musical interest to the community—for example, to help soloists find others to play duets with or a pianist to accompany a solo? Or that promotes the musical interests of community members of all ages—beyond, that is, advertising the next school concert: for example, listings of websites local amateurs can consult to advance their skills? Or sites to learn more about musical apps; or for announcements of interest in forming groups from across the range of musics available in that community? Or is the next concert, the end-all, be-all of the program?

Conclusions

While many music educators hold tenaciously on to aesthetic theorizing and rationales for schooling, “The rise of critical theory in disciplines across the humanities in the 1980s and 1990s has all but swept aesthetics from the map” in favor of “the unmasking of art’s [and music’s] relation to ideology, historical and

political context, self-identification, gender and colonialism;” and “it is impossible now to argue that aesthetics is anything other than thoroughly imbricated with politics and culture.”⁷⁵

Aesthetics itself is a social institution, committed to preserving its ideology in a world that has changed since the 18th century. Thus, the many benefits of music and music education as and for praxis described above warrant the need to re-consider and replace the rationale of connoisseurship, contemplation, aesthetic “appreciation,” and “the imaginary museum of musical works” of the often taken for granted aesthetic ideology. At the least, the benefits of music and music education as praxis challenge that rationale and its supporting ideology as limiting in results and as failing students, the community, and society at large. And the praxial account offers an alternative that promotes more choices for participation by graduates in contemporary musical life.

In judging the proposed praxial alternative, keep in mind that one sure sign of an ideology at work is the temptation to be so devoted to it that all else is disregarded, denied, denigrated, or defended against. Thus, an ideology often becomes what might be called *ideolatry*: the veneration of a taken for granted ideology that can be defended only through institutional propaganda,⁷⁶ not through plentiful and notable evidence of the valued benefits that local communities and society at large observe being promoted by the institution.

A critical awareness of the dangers of ideological blinders in music education is a first step in reflective praxis—in becoming a *reflective practitioner*. The other “helping professions” are ethically concerned to reflect regularly on the success or weaknesses of their praxis: a doctor, for example, on whether a diagnosis succeeds or fails. Ethical failings in those professions amount to malpractice (i.e., malpraxis). In the praxial model, then, such reflection on the observable results of teaching praxis is ethically and professionally paramount. Again, since praxis involves actions that benefit others, the evidence for reflecting on and assessing its effectiveness is down-to-earth: How well have the musical lives of adults and society been discernibly served by school music education? Such empirical evidence results from regarding music as a social institution, from constantly examining the ideologies of institutions that support it (e.g., music publishers, instrument manufacturers, the recording industry, local music stores, parent groups, professional associations), and building

on the many findings of the sociology, social psychology, social and cultural history of music in fully aligning music education with the inherent social nature of music and its many noticeable benefits for musically enriching daily life.

Music is too valuable to be limited to only occasional moments of leisure-time contemplation. That is not to minimize the pleasures of moments when one's interests gravitate to such musics. But, in consideration of all musicing in the world, such occasional moments of contemplation are not common. And the value of music and music education therefore goes well beyond the speculations and limitations of the contemplative, 'good taste' ideology for 'music appreciation'. Surely, that institutional rationale and its ideology have not served school music well in recent years.

Music education *as* and *for* musical praxis can truly make music one of the 'basics' in schools and in the good life. Rather than relying on speculative claims about highbrow 'culture',⁷⁷ a praxial approach to music—of all kinds—and to music education will help promote the many sociomusical benefits for those whose lives, as a result, are *touched* by music, in the most affective and enduring sense of that word.

Notes

¹ For a rich analysis of personhood and the role of music in a holistic concept of a person as “an embodied, *enactive*, *social-cultural* being that interacts continuously with his or her sociocultural world(s), which includes her moral communities,” see: David J. Elliott and Marissa Silverman, *Music Matters: A Philosophy of Music Education*, 2nd ed. (New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 156 (italics original); also, 153–91, especially “Implications for music education,” 189–91. **N.B.:** The present article can be understood best by recourse to the many qualifications, citations, and warrants given in the endnotes.

² On aesthetics as an ideology, see, e.g.: Adam Krims, ed. *Music/Ideology: Resisting the Aesthetic* (Amsterdam: G & B Arts International, 1998); Hal Foster, ed., *The Anti-Aesthetic* (Seattle: Seattle Bay Press, 1983); and David Gramit, *Cultivating Music: The Aspirations, Interests, and Limits of German Musical Culture, 1770-1848* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2002), 21, 24–6, 59, 128, 154. On the “death of art” understood in aesthetic terms, see: Stanley Aronowitz: *Dead Artists Live Theories and Other Cultural Problems* (New York: Routledge, 1994), a postmodern critique. Sociologist Pierre Bourdieu describes a “*charismatic ideology*, which attributes to the work of art a magical power of conversion capable of awakening the potentialities latent in a few of the elect . . . ,” that calls upon abilities “acquired through long familiarization or through the exercises of a methodical training,” and that “the specific appropriation of works of art is a self-seeking silence

because it is what makes it possible to legitimize a *social privilege* by pretending that it is a gift of nature.” Pierre Bourdieu, “Outline of a Sociological Theory of Art Perception”; in *The Field of Cultural Production* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1993), 234 (italics added).

³ “Praxis” is often translated as “action” in social theory. However, for Aristotle, there were many qualifications for what qualifies as “praxis”—only some of which are covered in what follows. See, for more details: C. D. C. Reeve, *Aristotle on Practical Wisdom* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2013).

⁴ “Agency” (i.e., being an “agent”) in sociology refers to the willed and purposive nature of human action. **N.B.:** Herein, single (i.e., ‘scare’) quotes are used as shorthand for “so-called” and to highlight certain expressions, such as ‘good for’.

⁵ The idea of ‘fine art’ doesn’t appear in the Western world until the late 16th century. Before then, what was called “art” was, as described in what follows, a *social praxis* by which communities identified and expressed themselves, entertained, and promoted their cohesion. This notion was replaced by the rise of what, under the aegis of aesthetic theories, came to be called “the sister arts,” the idea of the different ‘fine arts’ that replaced the role of art as socially useful and that put ‘fine art’ on a pedestal ‘above’ daily life. See, e.g.: Henry Raynor, *Social History of Music from the Middle Ages to Beethoven* (New York: Taplinger, 1972); Larry Shiner, *The Invention of Art: A Cultural History* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2001); Stefanie Buchenau, *The Founding of Aesthetics in the German Enlightenment: The Art of Invention and the Invention of Art* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013); Preben Mortensen, *Art in the Social Order: The Making of the Modern Conception of Art* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 1997); Kurt Blaukopf, “The work of art: Product and factor of social activity;” In *Musical Life in a Changing Society*, trans. D. Marinelli (Portland OR: Amadeus Press, 1992), 64-70; Frederick C. Beiser, *Diotima’s Children: German Aesthetic Rationalism from Leibniz to Lessing* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). On the “sister arts” and the rise of the modern concept of “fine art,” see the classic history by Paul Oscar Kristeller, “The Modern System of The Arts;” In, *Renaissance Thought II: Papers on Humanism and the Arts in Renaissance Thought* (New York: Harper & Row, 1965).

⁶ Crafts have only recently been begrudgingly accepted in the category of ‘fine art’ after a long history of being denied that ideological status. In a review of an exhibit of ceramic crafts at the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, the anonymous reviewer of *The Economist* writes: “An object that remains functional never quite gains the aura that is normally associated with the highest creations of the imagination.” (January 24, 2015), 72.

⁷ “[O]ne of the developments associated with the emergence of a concept of fine art is the distinction between art and craft: that is, works with ‘aesthetic’ value and those with practical usefulness. Such product-oriented definitions overlook that ‘craft’ is a socially loaded term, closely associated with the petit bourgeois craftsperson rather than the ascendant cultivated middle class to whom the more prestigious concept of ‘art’ is linked. In privileging—even momentarily—the aesthetic, the social distinctions on which it is built vanish all too easily.” David Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 164. Also

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consider the social overlap between “cultivated” and “cult.” “This distinction between the work of the artist and the artisan was institutionalized, in mores and minds, through the distinction between the fine arts and the applied arts. It is expressed in the *cult* of pure art whose idol is the ‘portable’ work of art; easel painting made to be enjoyed in salons and museums.” Jacques Rancière, *Aisthesis: Scenes from the Aesthetic Regime of Art* (London: Verso, 2013), 138–39 (italics added).

⁸ “[T]he habit of overlooking the social relations of musical production is so naturalized that it pervades the field of music scholarship. Because the cultivated and reflective listener is firmly established as the focus of the scholarly tradition . . . a failure to perceive that that social situation of scholarship has so nearly duplicated that of the culture of classical music that the very issue of social position has seemed uninteresting. The result has been [that] musicology has, in effect, assumed the universal validity of central practices of the musical culture in which it originated.” Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 164. Thus such studies themselves are the products of the already taken for granted social prejudice of regarding music as a ‘fine’ art of interest only to cultivated listeners, with theory and musicology providing technical support for aesthetic theories; see, e.g., Justin London, “Musicology;” in T. Gracyk and A. Kania, eds, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*. (New York: Routledge, 2011), 500. London writes, further, that scholarly study of music has as its goal “to highlight the features of a work whose aesthetic value never is in doubt” (503). And the single-minded exposure to such scholarship serves to reinforce that aesthetic ideology in the minds of music teachers, to the exclusion of scholarship that focuses on the inherent sociality of all music.

⁹The plural “musics” replaces the collective noun “music” in discussions of praxis; the plural emphasizes the multiplicity of different social actions that take place via musical sound and its related social contexts. Musics are to music as foods are to food or laws are to law.

¹⁰ The term “musicing” was coined by David Elliott as a contraction of “music making” to describe music as social action (i.e., the ‘doings’ of listening, composing, performing, etc.); Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, 2nd ed., 16; and *passim*. Social theorist Christopher Small, for the same reason, also regarded music as a verb form: a social action that goes well beyond musical ‘works’ as ‘things’ (nouns) and spells it “musicking,” based on the spelling of “musick” at the time in English history—before the 18th century invention of aesthetic theory—when all music was praxial; Christopher Small, *Musicking: The Meanings of Performing and Listening* (Hanover: Wesleyan University Press, 1998), 8–10. Either spelling gets to the main point: music is praxis, not a collection of ‘works’ in a concert hall museum, Even there, however, it is still a social praxis in the many ways described in what follows.

¹¹ This is not an attempt to compare “God bless America” to Beethoven; only to stress the sociality involved in both events, although at different levels of musical complexity. However ‘low’ (unsophisticated?) a particular category of music is supposed to be on an aesthete’s hierarchy, it is nonetheless valued by many thoughtful people. It is an elitist prejudice to rank the ‘goodness’ of music according to how *inaccessible* it is to musically ‘uncultivated’ people. And, if most people have been through school music programs, why are they so musically uncultivated?

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¹² In what sense is a concert or opera not entertainment? The social history of music and “listening (or reception) history,” demonstrates that, before aesthetic theory appeared, “good music” was considered to be entertaining—especially opera, but even concerts of an unimaginable collection of different musics (Richard Taruskin, *The Oxford History of Western Music, 5 vols.* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2010), *passim*). This monumental study is seemingly the only extensive musicological scholarship that acknowledges, even stresses, the sociality of music and the effects ignored by historical surveys taught in colleges. Some aesthetes thus make a distinction between “music lovers and opera lovers”; the latter are said to require acting, costumes, sets, love, drama, and the like—all of which, according to standard aesthetic theory contaminate the purity of music by their worldly references, no matter how alluring the music. On the *aesthetic formalism* claimed for the “pure” (wordless) musical experience, see: Peter Kivy, *Music Alone: Philosophical Reflections on the Purely Musical Experience* (Cornell: Cornell University Press, 1990). See, also, Noël Carroll, *The Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 1999), 107–54 .

¹³ As did the rise of schooling for women.

¹⁴ Action (or regulative) ideals are intentional states that, far from being “idealistic,” guide most of our everyday values and actions. Being a “good parent” is an action ideal. So are “good health” and “good manners.” These ideals direct our actions towards the desired ‘good’, yet never reach a final state of completion. Being a “good friend” changes over time, and according to those we befriend.

¹⁵ At least as defined outside of Great Britain, where “public schools” are in fact private schools.

¹⁶ On transformation vs. transmission see: Kathleen Bennett deMarrais and Margaret D. LeCompte, *The Way Schools Work: A Sociological Analysis of Education, 3rd edition* (New York: Longman, 1999), 5–42.

¹⁷ Private (studio) lessons and community music offerings certainly qualify as music education. Although they are not the focus here, most of the considerations covered also apply to them.

¹⁸ Such as Woodie Guthrie’s “This land is your land, this land is my land.” Set to a traditional hymn tune, its text often misunderstood as nationalistic when, in fact, it celebrates *communist* ideology and was conceived as an antidote to “God Bless America.” Yet it is regularly taught, under the mistaken pretense of patriotism, to generations of U.S. youth who have no idea of the heritage of the song, its social and historical context, or the political intentions of its lyrics.

¹⁹ Many aesthetes thus fail to see concert attendance as in any way social or socially valued. And listening at home to recordings is either condoned or condemned: some music lovers are rabid CD collectors; others abjure all but live music. But the social roots of the praxis are, in either case, ignored. Listening to recordings in the privacy of one’s home is but a different form of audience behavior (even then, it depends on

whether you're listening alone or with others with whom you exchange remarks, gestures, etc.), having its own collection of socially embedded actions: e.g., the music listened to, the recording industry and the intervention of recording engineers in what "the music" is that is heard, etc. And, unlike the concert hall, you are allowed to conduct along or otherwise react to the music physically (not to mention go to the bathroom). Such physical reactions to music are disallowed among aesthetes for whom any bodily response is denounced—the ideological basis for the restrained behavior of audiences of 'high' concert musics. More about the inescapable social dimensions of 'high' concert music follows. Also, see: <http://www.artsjournal.com/2016/03/research-music-is-inherently-a-social-experience-even-when-you-listen-on-earbuds-alone.html>.

²⁰ See, for the important difference between a *rationale* and a *philosophy* of music education, Elliott and Silverman, *Music Matters*, 36–43.

²¹ Not included in the summary are pragmatic and phenomenological theories of art, and various anti- and non-aesthetic theories from the philosophy of art and postmodernism that, despite their critiques, are sometimes indiscriminately included as "aesthetics" because they are about art. For a postmodern critique of aesthetics, see e.g.: Noël Carroll, *Beyond Aesthetics: Philosophical Essays* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Stuart Sim, *Beyond Aesthetics: Confrontations with Poststructuralism and Postmodernism* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1992). For a pragmatist perspective, e.g., Thomas M. Alexander, *John Dewey's Theory of Art, Experience and Nature: The Horizons of Feeling* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1987). For a phenomenological perspective, e.g., Arnold Berleant, *Re-thinking Aesthetics* (Burlington: Ashgate, 2004) and Mikel Dufrenne, *The Phenomenology of Aesthetic Experience* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1973).

²² Consider the rationalist example that a person wearing a white shirt in a lighted corridor painted dark blue will appear to be wearing a light blue shirt. A musical example is distinguishing between hearing music at a slow tempo as being in simple triple meter (3/4) vs. compound duple meter (6/8).

²³ The Enlightenment contributed to the rise of empirical science. Regard for the empirical role of *aisthesis* had been stressed by Aristotle, but his principles of formal logic attracted more interest in support of the scholasticism of medieval Christian theology. Aristotle's support for *aisthesis* is thus "reborn" in the renewed interest of the Renaissance in empiricism, starting as early as with Copernicus, Galileo and Newton (often earning the criticism of scholastics). The tension between *aisthesis* (empirical sensibility) and rationality (logic and reason) was only beginning, and it continues to complicate thinking today in many fields, not the least of which are the arts. The "critical theory" of Kant took exception to earlier concepts of reason. However, the many speculations of aesthetics falsely attributed to Kant (see below) are reached simply by rational speculation and with lack empirical evidence for their claims. Praxialism, in contrast, looks to the ample factual evidence of musicing in history, society, and daily life.

²⁴ And still today: Robert Dixon, *The Baumgarten Corruption: From Sense [i.e., aisthesis] to Nonsense [i.e., aesthetics] in Art and Philosophy* (London: Pluto Press,

Regelski, Thomas A. 2016. Music, music education, and institutional ideology: A praxial philosophy of music sociality. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 10–45.
act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski15_2.pdf

1995). For details on the historical development of the concept of aisthesis into aesthetics, see: David Summers, *The Judgement [sic] of Sense: Renaissance Naturalism and the Rise of Aesthetics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987); for Baumgarten, see 195–7.

²⁵ Breant Kalar, *The Demands of Taste in Kant's Aesthetics* (New York: Continuum, 2006), 148, n.2

²⁶ “Often Kant’s theory of the aesthetic response [in the *Critique of Judgment*, Book 1, ‘Analytic of the Beautiful’] has been turned into a theory of art—sometimes called the aesthetic theory of art—by means of a functionalist pre-supposition, namely that works of art are things that have been designed for the purpose of bringing about aesthetic responses of the sort characterized in Kant’s theory of (free) beauty. . . . Kant’s theory is not a theory of art” but, rather, an “analysis of judgments of free (rather than ‘dependent’) beauty, for example, judgments of things like sunsets (which judgments take the form ‘This sunset is beautiful’.” Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*, 90–91; for the full explanation of this “mistaken transformation of Kant’s theory of free beauty into a theory of art” see 89–109. Readers whose musical interests include popular and mass arts will be interested in Carroll’s critique of “the ersatz Kantian theory of art” (107) on behalf of such musics. He also exemplifies that *philosophy* of art is not synonymous with an *aesthetic theory* of art. For more on that distinction, see: Noël Carroll, *Philosophy of Art: A Contemporary Introduction* (New York: Routledge), 1999, especially 155–81.

²⁷ The sublime, in the Romantic era, was understood in terms of the appeal of ‘raw’ nature and was distinct from beauty: Viewing the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, alpine vistas, or the northern lights was said to be sublime in the sense that it was beyond human creation, comprehension, or imagination, was impressively large and very attractive, and was often overwhelmingly powerful. It was a ‘wow’ experience of awe and grandeur beyond all possibility of human planning, judgment, imitation, or parallel. This was an action ideal in the arts for Romanticism. Consider Berlioz’s *Requiem Mass*, with orchestra, soloists, four brass bands each with 4 tympani, and a double chorus—so sublime, that it is rarely performed for lack of resources. Kant’s theory of free beauty in nature got, therefore, applied indiscriminately to art and music.

²⁸ Acceptance of the *ideological status* of ‘good taste’ leads to the social effects of an *aesthetic hierarchy*, with instrumental chamber and symphonic music at the top (as purest because lacking words that are necessarily ‘dependent’ on concepts from religion, love, and nature), with opera, vocal and choral musics somewhere in the middle, and various kinds of exoteric and popular musics at the bottom, because they are the most accessible to ‘undiscerning’ listeners.

²⁹ Theories of *aesthetic expressionism* in general share the conviction that the emotions ‘expressed’ are not the ‘real thing’. Thus, for example, crying at ‘sad’ music is considered inappropriate: You may cry at a funeral, but the concert music of a Requiem Mass should be regarded as “pure” music. As Kivy argues, the ‘sad’ looking face of a St. Bernard does not “express” sadness (the dog may in fact be happy) but is “expressive of” the human *idea* of sadness. See Peter Kivy, *The Corded Shell*:

Regelski, Thomas A. 2016. Music, music education, and institutional ideology: A praxial philosophy of music sociality. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 10–45.
act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski15_2.pdf

Reflections on Musical Expression (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1980); Kivy, *Music Alone*, 173–201; and Carroll, *Philosophy of Art*, 58–106. Over the latter 19th century, thus, sacred music became secularized by moving into the concert hall, while, especially in Germany, secular music was being sacralized as part of the German-led Romantic Enlightenment

³⁰ For a brief account of the rise of the idea of “art for art’s sake” in intellectual history, see: <http://xtf.lib.virginia.edu/xtf/view?docId=DicHist/uvaBook/tei/DicHist1.xml;chunk.id=dv1-18;toc.depth=1;toc.id=dv1-18;brand=default>. Accessed, September 16, 2015.

³¹ “Uselessness has its uses in art. In fact, sometimes art is defined by uselessness.” *The Economist* (January 24, 2015; no author cited), 72. On music and visual art of the bourgeoisie of the 16th–19th century, see: Richard Leppert, *The Sight of Sound: Music, Representation, and the History of the Body* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), a major study of the sociality of music in the rising middle class, as documented in the visual arts. Kant’s idolization of natural beauty referred not to “paintings hanging on the wall or statues in the garden, but the decorative wallpaper that transfers the free allure of birds or foliage onto the walls of homes.” Rancière, *Aisthesis*, 139. And, the author of the entry cited in n. 30 states forcefully that Kant would have deplored the entire idea of “art for art’s sake” had it arisen in his lifetime.

³² A socioeconomic *class consciousness* is thus created that greatly complicates matters for the aesthetic ideology/rationale of school music. One tacit assumption seems to be that children who are denied appropriate musical experiences at home need schooling to cultivate an appreciation for ‘good music’. If this is the claim, it certainly is not effective judging by the actual preferences of the public for art and music. On the problematic social role of public education (and not only schooling) to cultivate ‘good taste’ for music, see Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 93–124. The “disinterested” gaze has led to art and music being in a separate universe of museums and concert halls (that often make art and music available only to the wealthy). Rancière, *Aisthesis*, 19.

³³ For details about “automania,” see: Aaron Ridley, *The Philosophy of Music: Theme and Variations* (Edinburgh University Press, 2004), 1–16. Note, again, the distinction between “aesthetics of music” and the “philosophy of music”: aesthetic theories of art are but one group of theories under the umbrella of the philosophy of art. Therefore, there is no mention of “aesthetics” in the index of Ridley’s monograph.

³⁴ On the rise of concerts, see, e.g., Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 125–60. Private concerts held in the homes of aristocrats and the rising middle class eventually expanded to public concerts for a fee. See, also, “The Rise of the Public Concert,” Raynor, *Social History of Music*, 314–30 (in Vol. 1) and *passim*.

³⁵ A “focused gathering,” according to sociologist Irving Goffman, is a “set of people who relate to one another through the medium of a common activity.” This paraphrase, uncited but credited, is by Lawrence W. Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*:

Regelski, Thomas A. 2016. Music, music education, and institutional ideology: A praxial philosophy of music sociality. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 10–45. act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski15_2.pdf

The Emergence of Cultural Hierarchy in America (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1988), 56. For more history of the rise of concerts in the U.S., see 107–15. Levine’s history of “cultural hierarchy” is directly related to the aesthetic hierarchy mentioned above.

³⁶ For the sociality that is ‘built in’ any music, see: John Shepherd, *Music as Social Text* (Polity Press, 1991) and the sources cited in n. 40. Even words *about* music have social implications: “[T]alk about music involves and constructs social categories.” And “if we take seriously the observation that music is inevitably a social practice, then musical statements [about music] are also social statements.” Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 3. This, of course, implicates all the many words of aesthetic theories as themselves *social statements* not factual principles.

³⁷ E.g., Brian Flintoff, *Taonga Puōro-Singing Treasures: The Musical Instruments of the Maori* (Nelson NZ: Craig Potton Publishing, 2008).

³⁸ On “disciplining,” “training,” and “taming” audiences, see Levin, *Highbrow/Lowbrow*, 186–200. Thus, wealthy patrons of the arts and leading arts organizations (usually the same people) “were active agents in teaching their audiences to adjust to the new social imperatives, in urging them to separate public behavior from private feelings, in training them to keep a strict reign over their emotional physical processes” (199).

³⁹ Lydia Goehr, *The Imaginary Museum of Musical Works* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1992). Goehr documents the fact that after around 1800, under the influence of 50 years of the aesthetic ideology, a fundamental change in discourse about music took place: “All references to occasion, activity, function, or effect [i.e., praxial conditions] were subordinated to references to the product—the musical work itself” (152). For further critique of the ‘work’ concept, see: Michael Talbot, ed. *The Musical Work: Reality or Invention?* (Liverpool University Press, 2000), although one contributor defends it. See, also, London, “Musicology,” 498–505.

⁴⁰ For the social essence of music as praxis: see e.g.: Henry Raynor, *A Social History of Music from the Middle Ages to Beethoven/Music and Society Since 1815*, [single-volume edition] (New York: Taplinger Publishing Company/Crescendo Book, 1978; Tim Blanning, *The Triumph of Music* (Cambridge: Belknap/Harvard University Press, 2008); Peter J. Martin, *Sounds and Society* (Manchester) Manchester University Press, 1995); Peter J. Martin, *Music and the Sociological Gaze: Art Worlds and Cultural Production* (Manchester University Press, 2006); Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life: The Politics of Participation* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2008); Tia DeNora, *Music in Everyday Life* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000); John Shepherd and Peter Wicke, *Music and Cultural Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1997); Austin Harrington, *Art and Social Theory* (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004); Janet Wolff, *The Social Production of Art* (New York: New York University Press, 1984); Derek B. Scott, ed. *Music, Culture, and Society A Reader* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2002); Kurt Blaukopf, *Musical Life in a Changing Society*, trans. D. Marinelli (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1992); Arnold Hauser, *The Social History of Art* (3 vols.) (New York:

Vintage/Random House, 1951); and both the earlier cited Gramit, *Cultivating Music* and Leppert, *The Sight of Sound*.

⁴¹ Philip A. Russell, “Musical tastes and society;” in David J. Hargreaves and Adrian C. North, *The Social Psychology of Music* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1997), 142. Most of the chapters in this collection attend to the social dynamics of music in various contexts.

⁴² “Fleeing ISIS Into Exile, Syriac Christians Sing the Oldest Music on Earth,” http://www.newsweek.com/2015/04/24/fleeing-isis-exile-syriac-christians-sing-oldest-music-earth-321852.html?utm_medium=email&utm_source=emea-email&utm_campaign=20150424-isis-exile-syriac-christians-sing-oldest-music-earth-321852. Accessed September 16, 2015.

⁴³ On Shostakovich and Stalin, see: Elizabeth Wilson, *Shostakovich: A Life Remembered, New Edition* (London: Faber and Faber, 2006); for Wagner and Hitler, see, e.g., Peter Caddick-Adams, *Snow & Steel* (London: Preface Publishing, 2014), 125–31. For the details of how politically and socially important music is, see: Eric Levi, *Music in the Third Reich* (London, Macmillan, 1994).

⁴⁴ See, for clarification, Peter Manuel, “Ethnomusicology;” in Gracyk and Kania, *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music*, 535–45.

⁴⁵ See, e.g., John E. Kaemmer, *Music in Human Life* (University of Texas Press, 1993).

⁴⁶ Thomas Regelski, ‘Music Appreciation’ as Praxis, *Music Education Research*, 8(2), (July 2006), 281–310.

⁴⁷ Not to be confused with Argentinian tangos. The practitioners of one will be at something of a loss in the musical world of the other.

⁴⁸ Another example: at an outdoor jazz concert a 3-chord blues band offered little that was ‘good for’ listening, but when the group encouraged dancing, the audience got in the ‘groove’ and enjoyed the music immensely. As to the “motor intentionality” of a ‘groove’ (and in contradiction to aesthetic accounts that deny bodily responses to music): “The feel of a groove is a central element of the body’s motor-intentional engagement with rhythmic elements of music.” Tiger C. Roholt, *Groove: A Phenomenology of Rhythmic Nuance* (Bloomsbury, 2014), 105 (and *passim*).

⁴⁹ “[T]he concept of culture . . . belongs with the family of terms standing for the human praxis.” Zygmunt Bauman, *Culture as Praxis* (London: Sage, 2000), 94.

⁵⁰ In Aristotle’s philosophy, *theoria* involved eternal and universal truths reached by reason, logic, scholarship, intelligence, and training. In today’s world, it would be associated with science, mathematics, and analytic philosophy. In Aristotle’s time it was, however, an undertaking of scholars (today they’re called professors). Its active form was contemplation, and this genesis survives today in aesthetic theories of art and music. Such a concept of contemplation is certainly one that is remote from typical lovers of art and the everyday appreciation of music.

Regelski, Thomas A. 2016. Music, music education, and institutional ideology: A praxial philosophy of music sociality. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 10–45. act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski15_2.pdf

⁵¹ However, always at risk concerning the proper place of *techne* are teachers who fail to observe the distinction between a “music” lesson and, say, a “piano” lesson. The former goes well-beyond *techne* to the question of what music *is* and is ‘good for’. Students who give up lessons are often evidence of the teacher’s lack of pedagogical ability to make that distinction clear. Such students are not similarly hampered by sports ‘practice’ because in those cases students know the personal benefits and pleasures of practice to ‘playing well’.

⁵² For Aristotle, the category of knowledge called *techne* involves a hierarchy that runs from the most basic level of manual skills learned simply by imitation and following handed-down rules, to advanced levels that require a considerable amount of understanding, deliberative control, choices of technique, and creativity when rules and tradition are not enough. The “practical wisdom” needed for the latter encompasses forms of (applied) *theoria* that are not contemplated for their own sake, but used functionally—both in *techne* and *praxis*. See, C. D. C Reeve, *Action, Contemplation, and Happiness: An Essay on Aristotle* (Harvard University Press, 2012), 55–7, 170–71, and *passim*.

⁵³ Thomas Regelski, “Amateurism in Music and its Rivals,” *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 6(3), (November 2007), 22-50: http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski6_3.pdf. (Accessed September 16, 2015). Ample citations, in the book upon which that article is based, are evidence of how often music lovers get turned off by teachers’ skill drill in pursuit of aesthetic standards of artistry. See Wayne C. Booth, *For the Love of It: Amateurism and Its Rivals* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2000). **N.B.:** *Amat* in Latin means lover.

⁵⁴ For important differences between “presentational” and “participatory” musics, see Thomas Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 23–65. *Presentational* musics require the kind of standards that end up *excluding* potential performers on the basis of ability or dedication; *participatory* musics, with their focus on musical sociality, are *inclusive* and accommodate all who are interested—at the same time that their skills are advanced through participation.

⁵⁵ E.g., Glenn Gould’s first and last recordings of Bach’s *Goldberg Variations*: Glenn Gould, *A State of Wonder*, SONY, SM3K 87703. Many hear these two performances not just as different interpretations but as different “music.” For elucidation of the “performance theory” that “thinks of music *as* (not *and*) performance,” see, Nicholas Cook, “Music as Performance;” in M. Clayton, T. Herbert, and R. Middleton, eds. *The Cultural Study of Music: A Critical Introduction* (New York: Routledge, 2003), 204–14; quotation, 205 (*italics original*).

⁵⁶ See, e.g.: Joan Peyser, ed. *The Orchestra: Essays on Its Origins and Transformations* (Milwaukee: Hal Leonard, 2006).

⁵⁷ E.g., Bourdieu, Habermas, Durkheim, Bauman, Weber, Adorno, and others. The sociology of music is dominated by European scholarship and the discipline seems to

be all but ignored in the U.S., and it is altogether absent in the music education of teachers in many countries.

⁵⁸ Bauman, *Culture as Praxis*, 61.

⁵⁹ As pursued here, an institution “consists of all the structural components of a society through which the main concerns and activities are organized, and social needs (such as those for order, belief, and reproduction) are met.” John Scott and Gordon Marshall, eds. *Oxford Dictionary of Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2005), 311.

⁶⁰ For example, homes that stress good manners and socially responsible behavior, excellence in school, and a range of similar values.

⁶¹ See, for this history: Marie McCarthy and J. Scott Goble, “The praxial philosophy in historical perspective; in David J. Elliott, *Praxial Music Education: Reflections and Dialogues* (New York: Oxford University Press), 19–79. I take some exception to mention of “the” in the title because praxialism is not a singular creed.

⁶² Thus presentational (concert) musics are steadfastly advanced to the exclusion of the many participatory musics that are featured heavily across the rest of society; see note 55. Recall, also, the important social implications of notes 7–8 on university music training.

⁶³ E.g., James H. Johnson, *Listening in Paris: A Cultural History* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995). Some traditional musicologists altogether reject the premise of “listening history”: that music was heard differently according to the social context of history, time, and place. For them, musical meaning is irrevocably ‘in’ the notated score (thus raising problems of unscored musics). See, e.g., Charles Rosen, “Beethoven’s Triumph,” *The New York Review of Books* (September 21, 1995), 52–6. In his argument against the relevance of listening (reception) history (and thus Johnson’s scholarship), Rosen makes a claim that he doesn’t realize, already takes for granted social class distinctions and cultural history (viz., public vs. musicians) and that relies on the elitist social judgment that “the music which is performed is not so much the works that the public wants to hear as those that musicians insist on playing” (52). This is the aesthetic hierarchy at work (and is historically uninformed), as enforced by positivistic musicology. The ‘new musicology’ of postmodernism is, to the contrary, decidedly interested in issues of the sociocultural contexts of musicing. Taruskin (2010), mentioned earlier, strives to achieve a balance between ‘performance history’ of the status quo of university ‘survey courses’ and ‘listening history’—what music *meant* to those in history from the records. And the answer is, the meaning was social, though progressively a divisive social class issue. But he has little good to say about “new musicology,” as any improvement over the “old” musicology, for its contention that music ‘contains’ and elaborates social ‘messages’. He instead proposes a balance between performance history and listening history. No doubt this will take a long time filtering down to undergrads, if ever.

⁶⁴ To be sure, all institutions are based on an ideology, in at least the foregoing neutral sense. Institutions therefore need to be critically attentive to institutional failings associated with their general ideology (e.g., institutions of justice, such as the law and police). But it is in the sense of the second, more critical definition that institutions need to be especially vigilant and reflective lest they actually foment social tensions (e.g., injustice) and become either self-defeating, or a source of social unrest (e.g., racially biased police). The *class consciousness* created by the social influence of aesthetic ideology (see n. 32) is an example of such a social tension, as are the challenges to the existence of school music and the irrelevance to most people of the ‘high’ concert music beloved by the ‘cultured’ few.

⁶⁵ Dominance, in this ideological sense, is not a matter of numbers but of social power, status, and influence. Thus, small and powerful groups typically dominate institutions; e.g., the 1% dominating the institutions of capitalism, or the clergy in religious institutions. On the struggle between different institutions for power, see David Swartz, *Culture and Power: The Sociology of Pierre Bourdieu* (Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1997), 117–42; on power and inequality in education, see 143–88. University and conservatory faculty, though small in number, thus tend to be the ‘gatekeepers’ and proponents of the aesthetic ideology.

⁶⁶ See, e.g., Robert Young, *A Critical Theory of Education: Habermas and Our Children's Future* (New York: Teacher's College Press, 1990); Shirley Grundy, *Curriculum: Product or Praxis?* (Philadelphia: The Falmer Press/Taylor & Francis, 1987); Joe L. Kincheloe, *Critical Pedagogy, 2nd ed.* (New York: Peter Lang, 2009); Wilfred Carr and Stephen Kemmis, *Becoming Critical: Education, Knowledge and Action Research* (Philadelphia: The Falmer Press/Taylor & Francis, 1986). See also, deMarrais and LeCompte, *The Way Schools Work*, 27-34 and *passim*. This strain of critical thinking resonates with the writing of Paulo Freire, though within a somewhat different sociocultural context. Furthermore, consider the difference between “training” in music, and “educating” in and through music. Shouldn't teaching music go well beyond the sense of “training” referred to in connection with animals or the regimentation of the military?

⁶⁷ There are, of course, schools where a broader array of musical choices are honored and offered; but the professional socialization into the dominant aesthetic ideology and paradigm often works against this in the mind-sets of many teachers. The curricular program offered by the 2014 winner of the first Grammy for Music Education is a leading example of praxis-based music education. See: <http://www.grammy.com/news/kent-knappenberger-the-grammycom-interview>. And (in this order): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XaPDBRUUJso>; <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WfOPAmJwmYU>; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cmQ8k_73HmM; https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QQct_M3qYuY. All accessed September 16, 2015. Note: several of these have “up next” continuations that give further details.

⁶⁸ Thomas Regelski, “Resisting Elephants Lurking in the Music Education Classroom,” *Music Educators Journal*, 100(4), (June 2014), 77–86.

⁶⁹ One conclusion of educating for ‘cultivated’ consumption of music is that such cultivation over history “inevitably excluded by far the greater proportion of the people; the terms of the sought-after transformation themselves render it impossible.” Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 124 (on “Education and Social Roles of Music,” see 93–124). This result unfortunately continues today with more students being *excluded* than *included*, which is socially unjust. In the praxial program cited in n. 67, typically 500 of 700 students in that school system are involved in the music program—and includes more boys than are in sports! And, at this writing, the community supports 4 full-time music teachers.

⁷⁰ As to the aesthetics of popular music, see Theodore Gracyk, *Listening to Popular Music—Or How I Learned to Stop Worrying and Love Led Zeppelin* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2007). Gracyk offers “Four Challenges to Aesthetic Principles” made by popular music (87–94). One conclusion he reaches is praxial: “that different musical categories serve different *nonmusical functions*” (99; italics added). Gracyk (and he’s not alone: see 14) argues *against* popular music as an art (22). Cf., John Andrew Fisher, “Popular Music,” in Theodore Gracyk and Andrew Kania, eds., *The Routledge Companion to Philosophy and Music* (New York: Routledge, 2014), 405–15. Fisher accepts that there are some (though unmentioned) “aesthetic dimensions of popular music” while acknowledging that its *social functions and signification* are an integral component of the music for the individual listener” (414; italics added), citing Gracyk (2007) for that praxial conclusion of Fisher’s section on “The social vs. aesthetic point of view” concerning popular musics. One unavoidable problem for aesthetics is that “notions of the popular are inevitably bound up with social distinction”—i.e., the very existence of the category of ‘popular’ already presumes music’s sociality and confirms the class-based distinction from ‘fine art’. See Gramit, *Cultivating Music*, 65–92; for the quotation, 65. On the aristocracy of ‘taste’ and cultural distinction see the classic sociological study by Pierre Bourdieu, *Distinction: A Social Critique of the Judgment of Taste*, trans. R. Nice (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1984), especially “The Aristocracy of Culture,” 11–96. Also, see Carroll, *A Philosophy of Mass Art*.

⁷¹ See: Thomas Regelski “On ‘Methodolatry’ and Music Teaching as Critical and Reflective Praxis,” *Philosophy of Music Education Review*, 10(2), (Fall 2002); 102–24.

⁷² For details, see: Thomas Regelski, “Ethical dimensions of school-based music education;” in Wayne D. Bowman and Ana Lucía Frega, *The Oxford Handbook of Philosophy of Music Education* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 284–304; and Thomas Regelski, “Musicianism and the ethics of school music.” *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education*, 11(1), (September 2012), 7–42; http://act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski11_1.pdf. Accessed September 17, 2015

⁷³ The often single-minded focus on “presentational” (concert) music is a key cause for the progressive dropout rate of students over the school years: as criteria become more musically demanding (and less social), students drop out. See, Turino, *Music as Social Life*, 98. “Participatory” musics do not suffer from this drop-out rate since their value is primarily sociomusical; the doing is the musical reward, not rehearsing for a concert.

Regelski, Thomas A. 2016. Music, music education, and institutional ideology: A praxial philosophy of music sociality. *Action, Criticism, and Theory for Music Education* 15 (2): 10–45. act.maydaygroup.org/articles/Regelski15_2.pdf

⁷⁴ And, by the way, there seems to be an aversion in music education circles to school music faculty displaying their musicing for students. Take for example the teacher, say, giving a recital in the local library (a good idea in praxial music education), but also faculty who have formed ensembles (‘for’ their own musical interests) that are social examples of adults making music. Consider, in this regard, say, a woodwind quintet of teachers from various schools performing at concerts in their respective schools. There seems to be an unfortunate understanding that such teachers are “showing off.” Indeed! They are showing and modeling both musical excellence and the sociality of chamber musicing among adults! And they can provide access to musics that many students and local audiences otherwise miss.

⁷⁵ John J. Joughin and Simon Malpus, eds. *The New Aestheticism* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 1, 3. The “new aestheticism” proposed involves “an openness to alterity, and developing a pedagogy that refuses to be prescribed by conventional or a priori [aesthetic] categories” (2).

⁷⁶ Propaganda, in the broad social sense, is communication (i.e., publicity, advertising, and advocacy) aimed at the public in support or defense of an institution. See Microsoft’s *Encarta Dictionary*.

⁷⁷ See Levine, *Highbrow/Lowbrow* for an interesting historical challenge to simplified aesthetic accounts of ‘Culture’ with a capital “C.” See also: Michael Kammen, *American Culture American Tastes: Social Change and the 20th Century* (New York: Alfred A Knopf, 1999)—keeping in mind that we are well into the 21st century.

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